

February 15, 2010

MINONG, WI - Seventh District Congressman Dave Obey (D-WI) was in Minong today to visit North Woods Community Health Centers' Minong clinic. The clinic received a \$464,000 federal grant from the Department of Health and Human Services for capital improvements. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) provided the grant funding. As Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, Obey was a lead author of the Recovery Act. In addition, last year Obey secured \$100,000 in federal funds to help the clinic purchase essential dental equipment, including a digital x-ray machine.

"I'm glad to see how the clinic is using the federal Recovery Act funds to offer more services to local residents and update their facilities and dental equipment," said Obey. "In economic hard times, many more people need health and dental services and like the folks who work at the North Woods Community Health Centers, I believe that health care is a right that everyone deserves and I'm glad we were able to secure these funds to help the clinic serve more people."

North Woods Community Health Centers is comprised of two community-based clinics located in Hayward and Minong, Wisconsin. The Minong clinic sees approximately 7,000 patients annually. The Minong clinic is using its \$464,000 of ARRA funding to construct a new reception area, a new digital x-ray room and a new pharmacy, the only pharmacy within 20 miles of Minong. In addition, five existing patient rooms will be expanded. Construction is underway and scheduled to be completed at the end of April.

Noting that "we're facing a 'silent epidemic' of oral disease in this country because of a lack of available dental care, especially in rural areas and for the most vulnerable among us," Obey said he is especially pleased that the clinic is able to expand and upgrade its dental health program. "Lack of dental care is no small problem. Children have died because of infections brought on by the absence of dental care," he added.

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